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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 10

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900  
Seattle, Washington 98101-3140

January 4, 2013

Reply To: ECL-112

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Equinox Resources, Stevens County, Washington  
EPA Site Identification Number WAD980834808  
also known as Van Stone Mine

**FROM:** Monica Tonel, Site Assessment Manager  
Assessment and Brownfields Unit

*Monica Tonel*

**CONCUR:** Sylvia Kawabata, Unit Manager, Assessment and Brownfields Unit  
Office of Environmental Cleanup

*Sylvia Kawabata*

**TO:** CERCLA Site File

The purpose of this memo is to document the decision by the Site Assessment Program to designate the above subject site an "Other Cleanup Activity: State Lead Cleanup" site, and to assign a Final Assessment Decision (FAD) determination to the site. The decision to assign a FAD to this site is in accordance with the Superfund Program Implementation Manual FY 11, Appendix A, page A-7 which states that Regions may assign a FAD to a site that *"has been cleaned up or is making progress towards cleanup as supported by documentation (worksharing agreements, site-specific progress reports, AOCs, remedial action plans, VCP/other MOAs, etc.) between the non-EPA party and EPA stating that the site has been or is being cleaned up or addressed according to appropriate cleanup standards."*

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) is the lead regulatory agency managing the Equinox Resources site, also known as Van Stone Mine. Currently, Ecology is directing a remedial investigation of the site. A remedial investigation is being conducted at the site to provide information about the extent of contamination. A feasibility study is also underway and will evaluate cleanup options. The site manager is Brendan Dowling of Ecology's Eastern Regional Office in Spokane, at (509) 329-3611. The site is listed in Ecology's database under Van Stone Mine, Facility Site ID # 1554858.

Contamination at the site is a result of past mining operations. Lead and zinc mining explorations began as early as 1926 at the site and stopped in 1993. Past sampling

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showed soil contains arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, mercury, and zinc at levels that exceed state standards. Groundwater also exceeds state standards for arsenic, cadmium and lead.

Ecology has reported that the potentially liable parties (PLPs) for this site are American Smelting and Refining Company (Asarco), Callahan Mining Corp., Sundown Holdings, Ltd., Equinox Resources (Wash.) Inc., and Vaagen Brothers. Asarco filed for bankruptcy in 2005. Ecology filed a claim against Asarco for cleanup of environmental damages in Washington State. A settlement was reached and Ecology received \$3.5 million toward cleanup of the Van Stone Mine site.

In 2012, Ecology developed a Work Plan to address impacts from major erosion that occurred at the upper tailings pile. Ecology conducted work in October 2012 to reduce or eliminate future releases from the upper tailings pile due to erosion. Work conducted at the site related to the Work Plan and Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) is coming from the Asarco settlement. Additionally, Ecology has entered into an Agreed Order with Vaagen Brothers Lumber Co., Inc. The Order requires Vaagen to give Ecology access to property that lies within the Van Stone Mine site for purposes of conducting a RI/FS.

In light of Ecology's ongoing involvement at this site, the action name OCA will be added to CERCLIS with a non-NPL status value of Other Cleanup Activity: State-Lead Cleanup. The OCA start date and FAD determination date to be entered into CERCLIS for this site is the date of this memo.